

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and allowance in view of the foregoing amendment and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

An Information Disclosure Statement is concurrently filed. Consideration of that IDS and return of an initialed and dated copy of the art listing accompanying the same is solicited.

The drawings were objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

With regard to the Examiner's objection that "arms" of claim 12 are not illustrated, it is respectfully noted that the specification makes clear that each lifting cradle 11 comprises two arms 15 pivotally mounted on pivotal mountings 12a of base 12 and that elongate buoyancy tanks 16-20 extend (longitudinally) between the two arms to define the part-cylindrical cradle 11. Figure 1 is clearly an end view of the cradle just described, with a vessel 14 supported on platform 22. Inasmuch as the specification and drawings are directed to the skilled artisan, from the foregoing description and the schematic illustration of Figure 1, it is believed that the lifting cradle has been sufficiently illustrated and disclosed to be in full compliance with 37 CFR 1.83(a); the two arms 15 of the cradle are simply longitudinally spaced and identically configured with the buoyancy tanks 16-20 extending therebetween. It is believed that since this relatively simple structure is schematically illustrated, and would be well understood from the foregoing disclosure and illustration, so that e.g., a plan view is not required for compliance with 37 CFR 1.83(a). If the Examiner remains of the opinion that such a view is indeed required, then Applicant would be happy to supplement the original drawing illustrations since such a further illustration would not introduce any new matter.

For the reasons advanced above, reconsideration of the Examiner's objection to the drawings is requested. The remaining matters noted by the Examiner have been obviated by the amendments to claim 12 and cancellation of claims 20-31.

Claim 12 was objected to because of noted informalities. The matters noted by the Examiner have been corrected above. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are requested.

Previously presented claims 12-18, 20-28, 30 and 31 were rejected under 35 USC 112, first paragraph, as allegedly failing to comply with the enablement requirement. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claim 12 has been extensively amended above to largely revert to original PCT application claims 1 plus 2. These claims are clearly in full compliance with 35 USC 112, all paragraphs. It is therefore respectfully requested that the Examiner's rejection be withdrawn. Indeed, support for amended claim 12 may be found in PCT claims 1 and 2, together with the original specification of the PCT application at page 7, line 15, to page 8, line 6.

With regard to the prior art rejections previously advanced based on Hey, the claims as presented hereinabove define a boat lift wherein buoyant chambers are flooded with water to enable a lifting cradle to be lowered into a submerged position and thereby permit a vessel to be floated into the cradle, and subsequently purged of water to increase the buoyancy and lift the vehicle clear of the water. This concept is completely different from the arrangement shown in Hey, where the lifting of the vessel is achieved not by flooding and purging of buoyant tanks but instead by linear retraction of hydraulic cylinders. See in this regard, Hey (U.S. Patent No. 6,823,809) at column 5, lines 45-51, and column 6, lines 26-33.

With regard to the Examiner's earlier rejection under 35 USC 103(a), it is respectfully noted that the present invention provides a dry-dock system that is capable of lifting vessels out of the water, while maintaining improved stability of the vessel

being lifted. This is achieved by means of buoyant bases provided with two pivotally-mounted arms which pivotally-mounted arms each have an arcuate track running along them, which engage the wheels of a platform to maintain the platform in a horizontal attitude as it is lifted out of the water. The advantage of this configuration that when the vessel is fully raised out of the water, it is evenly supported by the platform, rather than having a small area of the vessel hull in contact with the water, as is the case in most conventional docks. This is illustrated in Figure 1 of the present application. It can be seen that the right hand vessel 14 is supported by a self-leveling platform 22 which is entirely clear of the water surface 28, and, thus, much more stable and not vulnerable, for example, to motion of the water.

Hey does not teach or in any way suggest a dry-dock having a vessel supporting platform which independently runs in a track provided on pivoting arms. In particular, a vessel supported by the watercraft lift disclosed in Hey would be supported only on two points 14 of the hull and any motion of the water would be directly transmitted to the supported craft, resulting in a lack of stability and inherent danger to an operator.

For all the reasons advanced above, it is respectfully submitted that the claims are not anticipated by nor obvious from the prior art of record.

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All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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